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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A Study of Mothers of Young Children who Watch Television

by

© Cheryl J. Turner

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Education

Department of Educational Psychology

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall, 1986

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ISBN 0-315-32346-9

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Study of Mothers of Young Children who Watch Television submitted by Cheryl J. Turner in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

.....Supervisor

.....

.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

To my family, especially my Mother and Father, whose encouragement and support made this project possible.

ABSTRACT

The present study was designed to examine children's styles of watching television and to explore the relationship between this and certain qualities of the home environment. Thirty mothers were rated on the basis of their responses to interview questions, to the 16PF Questionnaire, and on the basis of their behaviours in an observed interaction with their child. The purpose of the study was to examine the following questions:

1. What are the styles of watching television exemplified in the sample?
2. How do the parenting styles as well as personality dimensions of mothers relate to the children's styles of watching television?
3. How does the participatory nature of the interaction between mothers and their children relate to the watching style of the child?

To answer these questions, correlations were calculated between all measures. The results showed that the construct of styles of television watching (Bishop, 1983) could be applied to the present sample of children, and that the majority (56.67%) watched in the passive, sustain mode.

There was no consistent relationship between the mother's childrearing and the child's watching in either flow or sustain styles. However, mothers of children who segment were found to be somewhat less concerned, and lacking in appropriate protectiveness.

Mothers of children watching in the flow manner were found to be more abstract thinking, more emotionally stable and controlled, to show more sensitivity and trust towards others, and to be more imaginative. Mothers of sustaining children were more withdrawn and careful, while being more goal directed, tough minded and unsentimental. Children who segment were found to have mothers who were less perseverant, more conservative and conventional, and less emotionally stable in terms of lower frustration tolerance and greater irritability.

No consistent relationship was found between the children's styles of watching and the observed interaction with their mothers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who assisted in the completion of this project.

I would like to thank Dr. J. Bishop, my advisor, for his guidance and for persistently facilitating the "step beyond". I will continue to experience the learning for years to come.

To Dr. Bruce Bain, for his suggestions as a member of my thesis committee;

To Dr. Janis Blakey, for her suggestions as a member of my thesis committee;

To Jacob, who teaches me what it means to be a mother, for his practical inspiration;

To Lynda, for her assistance with my data collection, but mostly, for her friendship, encouragement, and infinite patience.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND INTENTION

A. Background to the Study

Among the communities of the world, few, though some, still remain relatively unexposed to the impact of mass-media technology. For example, one lesser developing country, Ethiopia, was serviced by ten Educational Broadcast Radio Stations covering ninety percent of the country (Booroff, 1982). Developing countries face the issue of whether to imitate Western models for instructional television, or to undertake the formative research necessary to determine objectives and assess the culturally unique audience needs and characteristics (Adkins, 1982). In Malaysia, for example, educational television program evaluation revealed that when video cassettes were used as opposed to direct transmission viewing in primary classrooms, viewing levels and teacher utilization increased threefold (Gallagher, 1982). The Central Broadcasting Television University of China, set up in 1979, offers seventeen courses ranging from scientific and technical subjects to humanities and social sciences. A newly-proposed English as a Foreign Language course faces many culturally similar problems concerning audience diversity, production technicalities, and bureaucratic issues (Flower, 1983).

In countries such as the United States, similar trends are shown. In Britain, Gunter (1982) discusses evidence on the negative effects of television on reading development.

In Australia, Holman and Braithwaite (1982) examined the relationship between aspects of family life and children's home television usage. Gunter (1982) reported research which investigated the relationship between television and cognitive skill development. These current issues represent a trend towards a more direct analysis of viewer attributes and processes of viewing (Collins, 1981) which appears to be international.

B. Reasons for the Study

In previous research, Bishop (1982, 1984, 1985) found that there were differences in the ways children watched television, that some ways of watching were more discriminating than others, and that the more discriminating ways seemed to correlate with what and how children learned (Bishop, 1985). Examining the ways in which children viewed television, he identified three styles of operation, which seemed to be consistent with the ways the same children played and performed at school. Two styles of watching were identified in connection with the children's viewing of television. A third school working style appeared in the classroom, which was not observed in the television watching process. Bishop (1983, p. 283) defined these styles of operation as "any identifiable pattern of action expressed during the course of watching, playing, or working". Bishop (1983, p. 283) theorized that the styles of watching and working are "modal signatures of action". By this he seems

to suggest different levels of involvement, and variations in the mechanisms by which children engage themselves in experience and are affected by it.

To date, the home environments of children have not been studied from this perspective. The major goal of the present study was to find out how the environments of children who flow with the television differ from the environments of those children who sustain or segment while they watch. The general hypothesis was that differences in this kind of competence may to some extent be explained by systematic differences in the environments these children encounter. A correlational study such as this cannot prove that differential environments cause subsequent differences in operational style, nor, on the other hand, that television itself is the major cause in the development of these different styles. However, the aim was to specify which aspects of the environment appeared to be dissimilar between those children who flow, sustain, and segment while watching.

C. Definition of Terms

Children's styles of watching television were defined in the manner outlined in previous studies (Bishop, 1983). Bishop states:

> If a pattern comprised movements that connected to the medium portrayed and wherein the actions were beyond those necessary yet still fitted religiously

to the task at hand, these behaviours were called 'flow'(p. 283).

If the child "consolidates his focusing, gluing his eyes and body to the visual display", and "focusing intensely" (Bishop, 1983, p.283), the child is called a 'sustainer'. 'Segment' means that the "child's actions are disjointed, with no smooth flow between attention, the processing of material, the organization for action, the consequences and their monitoring" (Bishop, 1983, 284).

In the present project, the home environment was defined as the psychological dimensions of the home, which are related to human interaction. Parenting style was defined as a system of rewards, punishments, and aspirations that parents have for their children in their interactions with them over time.

D. Organization and Design

The intent of the present study was to expose the salient events in the child's life which foster the construction of a style of operation for apprehending reality. Thus, the purpose was to explore several dimensions of the family environment, and particularly, the style of mothering. The general research aim was, therefore, to relate the quality of mothering to the child's style of television watching.

Specifically then, the present study addressed itself to the following questions:

1) What are the styles of watching exemplified in the sample?

2) How are the parenting styles as well as personality dimensions of mothers related to the styles of watching?

3) How does the participatory nature of the interaction between mothers and their children relate to the watching style of the child?

To measure the styles of watching, home interviews were carried out during which each child was video-taped as he or she watched television. These portions of the child's behaviour were then scored on the basis of Bishop's (1984, 1985) descriptions.

To answer the second question, an interview schedule was developed (see Appendix I) and administered to the mothers of children in the sample. On the basis of these responses, observers rated the style of the mothers on each of eight scales. The scales were derived following a procedure similar to that used by Baumrind (1967, 1971a), and Mosychuk (1969). To measure objective personality dimensions, each mother completed the 16PF questionnaire (Cattell, 1970).

To answer the third question, the mother-child interaction was observed on a puzzle-form board activity, and scored by a time-sample procedure. This observation provided information regarding how decisions were made, and who participated in their process.

Limitations and Delimitations

The present study was limited to studying the mother-child interaction as representative of the home environment. That is, the influence of fathers was excluded from measurement in the study. No control was made of the television program that the child watched at the time of the home visit. Home visits were not limited to a specific and uniform time of day. Additionally, since parents had to agree to participate in this study, the sample was one of a volunteer nature.

This study was also limited by the restrictions of any correlational study, in that it could not justifiably infer causality. Therefore, the aim was not to determine if a particular style of mothering caused a child to develop a particular style of watching, nor on the other hand, that the television was the major determinant in the development of style. As previously stated, the aim was to specify which aspects of the environment appeared to be dissimilar among groups of children with different styles of watching television.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The profusion of new research findings on children and television in recent years is burgeoning so quickly that customary reviews of the literature become an overwhelming task. For example, many complete and recent books on the subject may be cited: Bryant & Anderson (1983), Palmer & Dorr (1980), and Wartella (1979). Research has also rapidly become specialized, resulting in fragmented findings in diverse areas and obviating any integrated or holistic view of children's relationship with television (Frazer, 1981). This review has been divided into sections considering the current perspective on processes of viewing, the role of parents in the child-television interaction, and the issues concerning theory and measurement of parent-child interaction.

A. Current Perspectives on Viewing

Historically, most research relating to children and television has attempted to determine the effects heavy television viewing may have on the cognitive and social behaviour of children. Studies concerned with cognitive effects have covered a diverse range of interests from the effects televiewing may have on the patterns of reading behaviour and attainment (Gunter, 1982; Corder-Bolz, 1980), the development of imagination (Singer & Singer, 1976), and the development of retention and comprehension skills (Welch & Watt, 1980; Collins, 1981). Educators have criticized the

fast paced format of Sesame Street as a possible contributor to hyperactivity, impulsivity and behaviour problems in the slower paced environment of the public school (Bronfenbrenner, 1976; Singer and Singer, 1979).

Studies concerned with social effects have covered similarly diverse interests ranging from the effects of televiewing on social behaviours such as cooperation and helping acts (Friedrich and Stein, 1975, 1979) and aggression (Sheehan, 1983; Eron, Huesmann, Brice, Fischer, & Mermelstein, 1983), to the development of social mistrust (Gerbner & Gross, 1980) or trust (Gunter, 1982), and the construction of social reality (Hawkins & Pingree, 1981).

From these studies it would appear that heavy television viewing carries with it the possibility of having detrimental effects on the development of creative, analytic, and linguistic skills. Furthermore, the influence of television may pervade to other aspects of development, including social and personal development. However, recent research issues represent an advance from the original television violence-viewer aggression linkage question, and an extension of investigative interest that looks beyond these simple effects.

B. Processes of viewing

Collins (1981) states, "Together these trends have served to direct attention away from an exclusive focus on program content and outcomes of viewing and toward an

analysis of the cognitive tasks involved in viewing particular programs, and the ways in which viewers...might accomplish those tasks" (p. 328). These studies begin to take into consideration the activities and interpretive processes which occur concurrently with instances of viewing involvement.

Attentional Processes

In the current effort to define the construct of television viewing, the corollary question arises concerning the nature and definition of the processes of attention and involvement. Numerous studies measure attention as a function of the child's visual contact with the screen, and the effects of attention are measured in terms of comprehension of content.

Welch and Watt (1980) investigated the effects of attention on learning for preschoolers watching half-hour segments of "Sesame Street". Retention was measured by post-test questions selected to determine if children gained the specific content the program was designed to teach. The findings suggested that visual attention was indeed related to the learning of visually presented information, but not necessarily to the learning of aurally presented information.

This inconsistent or selective recall ability of preschoolers and young grade school children could be a function of age and experience. If this were the case, the

learning loss could then be attributed to "inadequate" general structures according to which story details might be processed (Mandler and Johnson, 1977; Stein and Glenn, 1979). In this vein, Stein and Glenn (1979) reported that third-graders elaborated significantly more story details than did first-graders, especially when the missing information fit basic categories of story structure the older children had already mastered.

Collins (1981) agrees that children as old as eight years retain a relatively small proportion of depicted actions, events and settings in typical programs but that memory for information important to plots improves dramatically with age. He states that young viewers attend to information that is obviously salient and potentially informative, but even when they know the important explicitly presented information from which inferences are to be drawn, they are significantly less likely than older children to "go beyond the information given" to infer implicit content.

Meringoff (1980) compared a televised version of a story with a picture-book version. The results indicated that the televised version constrained reasoning about the narrative. The book-version children seemed to draw on their own personal experience and general knowledge to go beyond the explicit details, while the television viewers relied more on details provided in the presentation itself.

Rice and Wartella (1981) suggest that younger children (4 to 6 years of age) seem to be more susceptible to the attention arousing effects of certain perceptually salient features of television such as high intensity, movement, sudden change, and other special visual effects.

In other studies reported by Husson (1982), young children typically attended to only one dimension of a visual stimulus, while older children were capable of "decentering" their perception to attend to more than one visual configuration contained in a single picture. Rice and Wartella's (1981) perspective on children's attention to the screen is explained in terms of cognitive processes related to perceptual boundedness. They elaborate several representational codes of television, and assert that the first kind, iconic representation, is presumably the easiest to process.

An earlier study by Levin and Anderson (1976) led these researchers to assert that children's visual attention to the television screen occurred because of the association with sound and auditory effects. They found that a range of auditory attributes - such as characters voices, lively music and sound effects - were very effective at eliciting the attention of children when they were not watching the screen. Their study found less consistent results relating to which program attributes would maintain attention if the children were already watching. Bishop (1982) asserts that children learn to use certain auditory cues, which then

become "markers" for their connection with significant on-screen content. This process then enables even very young children to monitor a television set while engaging in other activities, and to shift their attention to the screen in response to certain auditory or peripheral vision cues. Bishop (1984) asserts that learning to use these markers and perceptually salient features enhances an overall attention to properties and an exaggerated dependence on the concrete rather than the thematic dimensions of the medium.

Lorch and Anderson (1979) maintain that comprehensibility influences attention, and that what children bring to the viewing experience in terms of previous knowledge and experience will influence their attention and retention of the program content. These researchers proceeded to measure the attention levels of children given two different viewing conditions, either in the presence of a variety of toys, or without toys. The results showed that although visual attention to the television in the no-toys group was nearly twice that of the toys group, there were no between group differences in comprehension. That is, despite the lower attention levels in a viewing environment in which children could engage in alternative activities, comprehension of the program was not significantly different from that of children with high levels of visual attention. The authors interpreted the results as indicating that the primary causal direction is from comprehension to attention, rather than the converse,

and that variations in comprehensibility of the program may determine variations in children's attention to the television. These results also seem to lend substance to the possibility that eyes-on or -off the screen is inadequate as a measure of level of involvement in a program, and that active processing of content may also occur during the eyes-off period.

Collins (1981) examined how individual differences in cognitive processing influence the effects (in terms of comprehension) of television viewing. His research indicated that young children were less effective than older children at discriminating between central and peripheral aspects of program material. He suggested that the ability to link program events conceptually probably affects the type of information on which these children focus while viewing. This led Husson (1982) to postulate that if the conceptual framework that children bring to television affects how they select and organize information coming from the screen, then younger children might show high attention to program sequences that are perceptually interesting but that don't provide much information, whereas older children might ignore such sequences in favor of those providing plot information.

The above discussion indicates that there are many factors that should be considered when evaluating children's attention to television. In particular, attentional processes appear to be influenced by program stimulus

attributes as well as by the child's level of cognitive development. Both conceptual framework and experience influence conprehensibility of content as well as the child's knowledge of programming codes and cues.

When describing differences in television interaction, references are made to the concept of involvement rather than attention. Lindlof (1982) summarizes the common behavioural measures of involvement as being: frequency of concurrent activities while viewing, time of eyes-on screen, nonverbal indices of interest or orienting reaction, and strength of viewing attention through the use of distractor devices. Lindlof (1982, p. 85) reiterates, "Receiver states have traditionally been ignored in pre and post test designs. Rarely is any evidence presented to justify ... the assumption of constancy of receiver state". In conjunction with this question of involvement, the issue of whether televiewing is an active or a passive process continues to be debated.

Active versus Passive Processes

Some researchers affirm that television encourages passive, nonengaged watching (Marc, 1984). Others argue that it is an active process.

The traditional model of communication presumes an interaction between the speaker (the television) and the listener (the viewer). This requires a reciprocal exchange of messages. This model is evident in the frequent assertion

that television viewing in not interactive, that the child is a captive audience who can only passively receive what is presented. Broudy (1979) compounds the importance of the child-television interaction by suggesting that in the watching experience, meaning is not built from auditory language, but from projected images. According to Broudy, meaning has certain rule and structural properties that are ignored in current television programs, and he warns that children just receiving these messages devoid of verbal meaning will not be actively involved in the process. Postman (1979) also characterizes television as a "string of visual images".

Others have argued that televiewing is an active process. Rice and Wartella (1981), for example, take the position that the internal process of interpretation itself reveals the child as an active participant. Working from the construct of television as a medium of communication, they posit that active participation takes place in two senses: firstly, in the sense of interpretation of messages, which influences interpretation of subsequent messages, and secondly, in the sense that knowledge of one kind of media code influences interpretation of others.

Singer (1979) agrees that if children are to learn more effectively from television, they need the opportunity to rehearse the picture material whether through their own verbalization of the content or through parental mediation. This dual processing will enable children to develop

language and to apply these skills to reading. Singer and Singer (1976, 1979) focused on television and the development of imagination in preschoolers. Comparing groups of children who watched with or without an adult, to those who watched no television but participated in make-believe games, they found that children who engaged in make-believe play made the largest gains in imagination followed by children who watched programs mediated by an adult. These authors agree that a participatory and interactive level of involvement appears not only to enhance the learning effects of television but also to decrease the detrimental effects.

Collins (1981)argues that television viewing may shape the way in which non-television information is processed, and that social-familial relations may be approached differently as a function of social expectations derived from stereotypical television portrayals. Collins (1981, p.333) views the social stimuli purveyed by television as being at the center "of a causal configuration, in which prior social and cognitive growth shapes what children select and remember about the portrayals they observe, and the resulting representations in turn mediate the social sequelae of viewing".

Gerbner (1980) asserts that heavy television viewers tend to indicate a greater fear of being victims of crime and violence, greater mistrust of authority and less hope for the future than do light viewers. Hawkins & Pingree (1981) summarize Gerbner's position on social effects: "If

viewing a biased picture of the world on television has led someone to believe that the real world matches those biases, the overestimates of violence, law enforcement occupations and so on, will generalize to beliefs such as personal fear of violence, acceptance of authority and so on" (p.349). What seems to be important here, is not attitudes towards television, but the style of viewing and level of personal involvement while watching. Hawkins and Pingree (1981) agree that it may be that 'inactive' viewing is necessary for social reality effects, or that 'active' viewing inhibits the influence of the television viewing.

It is possible that both extent of viewing and fearfulness or mistrust are a function of some third variable such as an underlying personality characteristic. For example, another study (Gunter and Wober, 1982) based on a British sample showed that while fear of being a victim of crime correlated significantly with television viewing initially, this relationship disappeared when the influence of perceived internal-external control was partialled out. More recently, Gunter and Wober (1982) tested the opposite hypothesis that if television distorts reality at all, it is as likely to be towards feeling of greater security than danger, since typical programming features the triumph of good over evil. They obtained support for a cultivation effect of 'just world' beliefs. The direction of causality remains an issue in this line of study, however, as people who believe that the world is a just place may turn to

similar storylines as further reinforcement and clarification of their beliefs.

In general, these studies point to a current interest in individual differences in processing television. Although most would agree that television seems to encourage passive nonengaged watching, the majority of the foregoing researchers also posit that active participatory watching helps to overcome or even to negate the detrimental effects of televiewing. In this regard, Bishop's studies are unique in that he postulates three identifiable styles of watching, one of which is a participatory style.

Three Styles of Operation

Bishop's (1982,1983,1984) research contributes greatly towards the formulation of theoretical conceptions of the viewing experience, and forms the basis for the present research. In previous research, he found that there were differences in the ways children watched television, that some ways of watching were more discriminating than others, and that the more discriminating ways seemed to correlate with what and how children learned (Bishop, 1985). Examining the ways in which children viewed television, Bishop identified three styles of operation, which seemed to be consistent with the ways the same children played and performed at school. Two styles of watching were identified in connection with the television, and a third school working style appeared as well, which has not as yet been

observed in the television watching process. Bishop (1983) defines these styles of operation as "any identifiable pattern of action expressed during the course of watching, playing, or working" (p. 283). Of the three styles identified, "flow", "sustain", and "segment", the first two styles appeared to surface with greater frequency.

In the style characterized by a "sustaining" pattern, the child "consolidates his focusing, gluing his eyes and body to the visual display" (Bishop, 1983, p.283). The pattern of movement expressed by the sustaining child links only partially to the task (of watching), and these actions "seem frozen and catatonic, with the child fused into a trance-like state" (Bishop, 1983, p. 284). As they watch television, they sit motionless facing the screen; bent slightly forward from the waist, heads tilted forward, and eyes glued to the screen. Often their "chins are dropped with jaw muscles slack, causing the mouth to hang open in the shape of an 'O'" (Bishop, 1983, p.284). At school, children exhibiting the sustain style of operation were also found to sit "absorbed in the globality of the lesson" (Bishop, 1983, p.284), and to miss most of the action around them due to the exclusivity and profundity of their focus on one singular task at a time.

The flow style of operation, on the other hand, is more flexible, and the patterns of movement are connected to the medium portrayed. The behaviours called "flow" are comprised of actions "beyond the necessary, yet still fitting the task

at hand"(Bishop, 1983, p. 283). Flowing children may converse with others at hand while watching, and seem to anticipate the consequences of the story to follow. Flow-ers rehearse as they watch, talk to the characters, argue with newscasters, and give answers to quiz show contestants. These children are socially inquisitive and active. In previous studies, these children also seemed to retain more from what they watched, as they played out more themes appearing in the show than did sustainers. The essential characteristic of this style is participation, and engaged involvement in the world. These are the children who play as they watch.

The third style of behaviour employed by children watching and working at school is the "segmenting" pattern. This style is detached from the task. Bishop describes this child as a "committee who functions in spurts and hops, completely unable to act in a consequential manner. The segmenter's actions are disjointed, with no smooth flow between attention, the processing of material, the organization for action, and the monitoring of consequences" (Bishop, 1983, pp. 284). He compares this style of operation with the behaviours usually falling under the hyperactive rubric, but makes the distinction that segment is "not a concept of tempo, but one which accounts for a disruption in the quality of behaviour, where the flow between intention, action and consequence does not exist" (Bishop, 1983, p.284). The characteristic differentiating the sustain from

the flow style is that sustain is passive nonengaged watching. Bishop (1983, p. 285) states,

> those children who seem curious and competent seem to flow in all they do. This process is not a function of efficient causation, but a holistic...process of thinking, and acting. To achieve this super function all actions and thoughts must be symphonically coordinated such that all actions become poetic and enlightened.

These observations suggest that operational styles of watching are intuitively and behaviourally identifiable constructs which differ from person to person. Theories of cognitive processing, while invoking a generalized competency, do not address the style of operation involved in effective action and interaction. "Flow" is the only way, according to Bishop (1983), of accurately accounting for the "poetic adaptation of an individual to an individual world" (p. 285). He further theorizes that the styles of watching and working are "modal signatures of action, which seem to suggest different levels of involvement, and variations in the mechanisms by which children engage themselves in experience and are affected by it" (p.286).

Previous researchers have looked at such things as amount of time the child watches, the friends and family members present during the watching session, the programs watched, and the characteristics of these programs has also been studied. However, the dynamics between the program and

the child engaged in the process of watching has not been investigated.

Frazer (1981) attempts to place the aspect of viewing television in the context of the overall social life of the child. Through naturalistic observation, he describes the nature and character of immediate social variables in the viewing experience. Although the sample consisted of only six families, excerpts from case examples demonstrate that the children were actively involved in forming and relating the television experience to their own social world, in using it to generate conversation topics, and to maintain social interaction independent of television. Reid and Frazer (1980) observed ten families and asserted that all the children were discontinuous viewers who frequently engaged in other activities while watching television. They used this finding to suggest that television watching is an active and interactive process. Their observations of different types of viewing behaviour led them to distinguish between two types which seem to have similarities with sustain and flow styles. In program-oriented interaction, the child uses the program as a barrier of involvement to block out other social interaction, creating a parallel social context. In free-form interaction, the program is used as a stimulus for improvisational play, creating an interactive social context with siblings and parents. Frazer (1981) declares, "While it is difficult to say with specificity what portion of child viewing is socially

interactive and what portion more fixedly attentive, the observations demonstrate the importance of multiple dimensions of viewing experience." (p.319). Frazer emphasizes that the child's involvement with the television material and actions towards it are what create an educational context even though the material is not being learned. He states, "It is not the specific content of television but what the child brings to it and the actions the child and the others involved take toward it which gives it meaning" (p. 317).

This description of operational levels of involvement in the viewing context is similar to Collins' and Wellmans' (1982) idea that children's conceptual framework and prior social experiences underlie differences in their comprehension of television narratives. It is also consistent with Salomon's (1983) idea that what children get from the viewing experience is influenced by the amount of mental effort they bring to the task. Again, it is consistent with Rice and Wartella's (1981) assertion that television watching may be an active and interactive process, and that levels of involvement in watching may determine the effects of television programming (Hawkins & Pingree, 1981).

C. Question Two - Dimensions of the Parent

Recognition of the potency of television as an influential medium has highlighted the need to identify intervening variables which, if appropriately manipulated, would maximize the positive consequences and minimize the negative. There still remains a lack in provision of a coherent account of which aspects of family life are most important. The majority of studies in which parents or significant others enter into the research scenario are concerned with their role as mediators or interpreters of what children view. The present research is concerned with more structural and stylistic aspects of parent-child interaction than those limited to the televiewing context.

Watkins, Huston-Stein, and Wright (1980) added to the research on the process of children's televiewing by demonstrating that the presence of an adult who sits with the child and makes interpretative comments during the pauses in the programs can be very helpful in enhancing both selective attention and comprehension of the material viewed. This could help the young viewer's comprehension by providing, through verbal cues, an organizing structure allowing the child to interpret viewed events with meaning.

Singer and Singer (1976) also found marked contrast in children's watching patterns when an adult was present during television viewing. There were indications of better concentration, much more interaction and involvement with the program, and fewer incidences of wandering away from the

program.

Corder-Bolz (1980) pursued the issue of parental involvement in children's televiewing with a particular focus on the ways parents controlled the amount and kind of programming their children viewed. He offers an important insight into how television programming can socialize viewers by distinguishing between primary and secondary socialization agents. Primary socialization agents, such as parents and parent surrogates, can be thought of as active and responsive in their role as communicators of social information (facts, values, expectations) and as providers of consequences in response to children's actions concerning those values and expectations. Secondary social agents such as television, are primarily passive and are limited to the role of providing social information but cannot respond to actions of the child, nor impose consequences. Corder-Bolz (1980) asserts that the role of television as a social agent is greatly increased when parents do not provide information other than that provided by television or when they fail to confirm or disconfirm certain issues. In other words, according to Corder-Bolz, the need for parents to pursue actively their roles as primary social agents becomes even more critical, and that they can do this by encouraging purposeful viewing.

Among the aspects of family lifestyle to be considered as influential are family communication patterns. A set of studies by Chaffee, McLeod, and Atkin (1971), although

somewhat dated, are more directly related to the purpose and approach of the present study. These studies set the precedent for a number of studies which follow. Chaffee et al. (1971) began with the assumption that children's patterns of media use were shaped by social influences in the home. Taking the idea of influence a step further than the direct modeling hypotheses, they theorized that it is the structure, not the specific content of parent-child communication that the child learns to generalize. From this research, an identification of family types emerged, based on differential characteristics of parent-child communication styles.

Chaffee et al. (1971) conceptualized families on a two dimensional basis, termed "socio-orientation" and "concept-orientation". In socio-oriented families, parents encourage their children to maintain harmonious personal relations, avoid controversy, and repress feelings on extrapersonal topics. There is an emphasis on obedience to parental authority at the expense of individual expression. Concept-oriented families, on the other hand, encourage their children to express ideas and to challenge other's beliefs. There is an emphasis on free inquiry and individual expression. These two types of families differed on several dimensions of television use, which Chaffee and his colleagues studied with a focus on the amount and type (program preference) of watching.

Basing his research on a similar family typology, Lull (1980) explored the ways in which socio-oriented and concept-oriented audience members differed in their uses of television as a resource for the accomplishment of interpersonal objectives at home. That is, television was used by socio-oriented family members to help construct an actively interdependent communicative environment, being used for various affiliative purposes, as a resource for conversational topics, and as a social learning device generally. Concept-oriented families, on the other hand, rejected the utility of television as a device for establishing, sustaining or improving social relations at home and generally reflected extreme disregard for television as a significant contributor to family communication. Instead, they reported utilizing the medium in order to transmit family values, to regulate the children's experiences, and to facilitate arguments. These are actions which, according to Lull, are concerned more with ideas than with social relationships. These studies are similar to the present project in that they are not limited to the viewing context, but include elements of the greater family atmosphere and take into perspective the nature and influence of interaction patterns.

Other researchers (Messaris & Kerr, 1983) found that concept orientation was associated positively with mother's exploration of moral issues raised by television programs in discussions with their children, and as an occasion for

giving their children information about historical, geographic or scientific details pertinent to the program. Concept oriented mothers frequently made statements that things on television were make-believe, and made nondirective critical comments on the behaviour of television characters. These researchers hypothesized that the family's concept orientation may be related to the child's greater awareness of television's potential as a "window on the novel and the unfamiliar"(p. 190), and with a more critical attitude, on the child's part, toward the relationship between television and reality. Socio orientation could be associated with the child's greater acceptance of television as an accurate rendition of reality.

Collins (1981) said that prior social experiences underlie differences in children's television interactions. Chaffee et al. (1971) agreed that it is plausible to assume that a child's patterns of media use have been shaped by social influences in the home. While Collins studied how children watch television in an attempt to define individual differences in watching and perhaps identify more functional ways of watching, he did not attempt to measure the more global social and familial influences which might pose as antecedents of differing styles of watching. Chaffee et al., while focusing on social influences on media use, in terms of communicatory behaviour of parents, did not expand individual media use beyond program choice and frequency of

viewing. The present research is an attempt to unite these two bodies of research.

D. Theories of Parenting Style

It will be recalled that questions two and three in the present study deal with the influence of parent childrearing style, personality, and level of participation in interaction on the development of the child's operational watching style. To approach the task of conceptualizing parental characteristics, the direction of several theorists is followed.

Many of the tenets of Werner's (1957) orthogenetic theory of development are formally applicable to a conceptualization of the developmental processes involved in mothering. Werner states:

> Developmental psychology postulates one regulative principle of development. It is an orthogenetic principle which states that wherever development occurs it proceeds from a state of relative globality and lack of differentiation to a state of increasing differentiation, articulation and hierarchic integration. According to this principle, a state involving a relative lack of differentiation between subject and object is developmentally prior to one in which there is polarity between subject and object (p. 119).

If we substitute 'mother' for subject in Werner's

definition, and 'child' for object, then a highly functioning mother-child relationship would be one in which there is increasing differentiation and polarity. That is, in the course of development towards higher or more facilitative levels of mother functioning, there is an increasing polarization between mother and child, an increase in interpersonal distance, which allows the child to differentiate and individuate.

An important corollary of this principle, according to Werner (1957), is that the mother becomes increasingly less dominated by the immediate, concrete situation. That is, she is less 'stimulus bound', and less impelled by her own affective states. In the present interpretation, to be stimulus bound, as would be the less differentiated mother, would be to focus on the child's concrete actions and visible accomplishments, on what the child actually does, without inferences regarding possible intentions. This level of functioning would consequently neglect, or fail to take advantage of the opportunities for facilitation of the child's goals and unseen intentions.

The mother's construing of differences and similarities between herself and her child is crucial. Particularly harmful to development is the lack of any overlap between the mother's concepts of herself and her children, as well as a total sharing of constructs.

Conversely, the more differentiated and highly functioning mother would be able to infer intentions, and

thus to facilitate goal accomplishment and build a more perpetuating condition for competence. Werner further clarifies that "a consequence of this freedom (from domination by immediate concrete situation) is the clearer understanding of goals, the possiblity of employing substitutive means and alternative ends" (p. 126). Thus, optimal functioning is seen as the parent's ability to differentiate between inner and outer aspects, between behavioural and motivational aspects of the child's personality, between the child's intentions and the consequences of the actions.

This process was referred to by Mahler (1979) as decentering. This is a psychoanalytic concept referring to the process of separation and individuation. Based on Werner's formulations, it is entirely conceivable that the mother, as well as the infant, goes through a formally similar process of separation and decentration. Mahler (1979) states:

> The mother too has to adjust to the anticipated crucial event of that inescapable separation ... Striking a balance between mothering without undue frustration on one hand, and without intrusion or stifling the infant's individual inborn rhythm of needs on the other hand, is a task not easily achieved by the average mother in our culture. Optimal evolution of the infant's ... separation and individuation processes, is either facilitated or

> hindered by the conscious and more particularly, the unconscious attitudes of the mother (p.6).

Since differences between styles of operation are essentially developed herein as differences in the level of involvement or depth of engagement in the process of interaction, it would seem most consistent to approach the parent-child relationship also in terms of levels of involvement. Lloyd DeMause (1974) maintained that the history of childhood is a series of "closer" approaches between adult and child, with each closing of psychic distance producing fresh anxiety. Parental anxieties and unconscious motivations, as Mahler proposes, work to limit their abilities or freedom to differentiate their own needs from those of the child. The comparison between Werner (1957) and DeMause (1974) is simplified with the clarification that "closer", in DeMause's terms, requires increased polarization, differentiation, and decentration in the relationship. DeMause's (1974) definition of empathic reaction clarifies:

> It is the adult's ability to regress to the level of the child's need and correctly identify it without an admixture of the adult's own projections. The adult must then be able to maintain enough distance from the need to be able to satisfy it (p. 67).

DeMause's theory implies that an emotional maturity is needed to see the child as a person separate from self, and to achieve an empathic, differentiated level of

relationship.

The upper three levels or modes of childrearing extracted from DeMause' (1974) theory are applicable here. Beginning with the lowest level, DeMause defines the Intrusive Mode in terms of parents' attempts to approach closer to their children, and to control their children's minds, their emotions, their needs, their will. In this type of relationship, children are made to obey promptly, with threats and guilt. The defining characteristic of this mode is control. In the Socialization Mode, raising children becomes less a process of conquering their wills than of training, guiding, teaching conformity, and socializing. This mode, according to DeMause (1974), is still thought of by many people as the only model within which discussion of child care can proceed. This level of parenting style has formal characteristics similar to the socio-oriented family style described by Chaffee et al. (1971). The highest level or mode of relationship, called the Helping Mode, involves the proposition that children know better than their parents what they need at each stage of life. Parents work to empathize with and fulfill their children's particular and expanding needs. Children are neither struck nor scolded, and are apologized to if yelled at under stress.

Ideally, this Helping Mode of childrearing results in children who are gentle, sincere, never depressed, never imitative or group-oriented, but who are strong-willed and unintimidated by authority. Helping children reach their

daily goals means continually responding to them, playing with them, tolerating regressions, being their servant rather than the other way around, interpreting their emotional conflicts, and providing the objects specific to their evolving interests.

A further point which DeMause (1974) makes serves to explain why developmental stages are not necessarily age-related or predetermined. He states, "Since some people still kill, beat, and abuse children, any attempt to (historically) periodize modes of childrearing must first admit that psychogenic evolution proceeds at different rates in different families, and that many people appear to be 'stuck' in earlier historical modes" (p. 68).

In the course of development towards higher or more facilitative levels of functioning, there is an increasing polarization between the mother and child, and an increase in interpersonal distance which allows the child to differentiate and individuate. Parents, as their children age, or as the number of children increases, also, along with the child, go through a similar process of separation. Some parents, due to their own childhood experiences, personalities, unconscious conflicts, motivations, and expectations, do not separate or differentiate as easily, and continue to see the child as an extension of their self.

It will be recalled that question two in this study also deals with various measurable personality dimensions of mothers and the influence these may exert on the child's

development of operational style. Personality dimensions are distinguished from parenting style by the indirect nature of their influence, and the fact that they are considered outside of, or in addition to, the parenting role. Thus, in this regard the mother is considered as a totality and not solely in relationship to the child. Personality characteristics are connected, albeit indirectly, to children's experiences and may affect their development of operational style.

Question Three - Participatory Interaction

Question three in this study deals with the level of participation in the mother-child interaction. In White and Watts' (1973) research, the key factor significantly discriminating the experiences of well-developing children from those of less well-developing children was the parent's direct participatory involvement in the child's experience. Mothers of well-developing children interacted more with them, engaged them in more stimulating activities, taught them more often, encouraged them more often, and initiated more activities for them. Defined as such, the participatory nature of interaction can be seen as a further aspect of level of involvement, and is consistent with previously elaborated theorists. White and Watts used an elaborate and extensive observational model to reach this conclusion.

In the present study, this participatory interaction is considered as a qualitative aspect of the relationship. The

assumption was made that it would be pervasive throughout the parent-child style of interaction. Thus, a brief, time-sample measurement of behaviour would allow for classification of each mother-child pair onto a continuum between participatory and non-participatory levels of involvement. Doing so would allow for a better understanding of the interaction process.

E. Measuring Environments

Complex and comprehensive dimensions of home and family are difficult to evaluate and measure effectively. Breaking complex behaviours into component parts entails the risk of discovering that parts are meaningless in isolation. Conversely, parenting style possibly covers so many dimensions that, without a pattern allowing definition, too broad a concept is also psychologically meaningless.

In summarizing a review of studies concerned with measuring home environments, Mosychuk (1969) found that a number of scales measured characteristics of the environment which he termed dynamic process variables. Among the studies he mentioned, Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957) vastly improved our understanding of the complex structure of childrearing practices. Many other investigations, including Baumrind (1967, 1971a, 1971b), Dielman and Barton (1983) and Mosychuk (1969), utilized the Sears' interview items and variables.

Observers in Baumrind's (1967, 1971a, 1971b) studies, could summarize their impressions of a family by rating the family on 15 childrearing dimensions. The rater's task was described as being to decide first which of two contrasting alternatives characterized the family being rated, and then to rate the degree to which the family was characterized by that alternative.

Mosychuk (1969) developed an instrument for identifying and measuring the home environment differentially in terms of "dynamic process characteristics", and examined the relationship between these environmental variables and different mental abilities of children. A rating scale designed for each variable consisted of a seven point scoring key with verbal construct definitions of the types of behaviours or home conditions that warranted particular ratings. As in Baumrind's (1967, 1971a, 1971b) studies, the families' ratings on these ten variables were evaluated through an interview schedule.

These instruments can be considered to have provided models for the present interview and the Rating Scales measures. The general procedure these researchers followed was to develop an interview schedule, and then to develop a series of Rating Scales on which the interview responses could be evaluated and subsequently coded. The interview schedule in the present study (see Appendix I) consists of twenty one questions taken from the Sears et al. (1957) interview, and revised in the light of Mosychuk's (1969)

interview. As in Mosychuk's (1969) study, the Rating Scales in the present study (see Appendix II) consist of a seven point scoring key, with verbal constructs developed from all of the studies mentioned. The use of seven points in each Scale was judged more discriminatory than the method used by Baumrind (1967, 1971), which utilized only two contrasting alternatives. These measures are further discussed in the following section.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study was an exploratory study utilizing a correlational design. The major objective of the investigation was to study, as systematically as possible, parental characteristics associated with children's styles of watching television. In this research, the basic question being asked was: What are the relationships between the parent-child interaction and the child-television interaction?

A. The Sample

Selecting Subjects

The sample in the present study consisted of families who volunteered responding to a poster which was distributed to community Public Health Clinics. Response forms were received by the individual administrators of each Health Unit, and then forwarded to the University. Total responses numbered 65, from which a random sample of 30 were selected.

Borg and Gall's (1979) suggestions for increasing the rates of volunteering and thus reducing volunteer bias were applied in the following ways. The poster distributed to Health Clinics was attractive, nonthreatening, and did not carry any implication of the evaluative nature of the study. The request was enhanced with the status and respectability

assigned to the University of Alberta insignia, and its placement in Public Health Clinics made it's appeal more personalized and normative. On the condition that participation might not have been perceived to be normative, the conditions of private commitment to participate in terms of submitting the response forms were considered optimal. Furthermore, the opportunity to promote the well-being of their children through informational feedback was considered to be rewarding.

B. Instruments Used

Interview Schedule

Various methods of obtaining information for the scales were considered, including the Q-sort, the incomplete sentences blank, and the interview.

The use of the interview as a research method is unique in that it involves direct verbal interaction between individuals. This direct interaction, however, has been cited as the source of both the main advantages and disadvantages of the interview as a research technique (Borg & Gall, 1979). The interview has certain advantages that other methods, such as questionnaires, do not have. For example, the interview situation permits much greater depth than other methods. In the semi-structured interview, the interviewer can probe for reasons for given responses. Researchers can go below the surface of responses, to

determine reasons, motives, and attitudes. As contrasted with the questionnaire, which provides no immediate feedback, the interview permits the interviewer to follow the leads of the subject and thus obtain greater clarity and depth of response on which to base judgments.

The decision to use the interview as the data gathering procedure was based, then, on the expectations that: (a) the interview situation allows the possibility of eliciting a high degree of cooperation on the part of the interviewee, (b) the opportunity to ask additional questions when necessary permits much greater depth of information than other methods, (c) the scope of the information obtained from oral responses is broader and provides a greater amount of detail.

The interview schedule in the present study was developed and revised from the well-established model provided be Sears, Rau, and Allpert (1965). This same instrument was also used by Baumrind (1967, 1971a, 1971b) in her studies of parenting styles, and was consulted by Mosychuk (1969). The original rather exhaustive list of interview questions was pared down to those items which, at face value, had applicability and content directed towards those aspects of parental behaviour hypothesized to be relevant or influential in the development of the child's operational style. The schedule consisted of specific questions about particular types of behaviour and conditions in the home which would be representative of the eight

scales. Thus the purpose of the interview was to obtain a qualitative measure of style of mothering. In addition, each mother was asked to disclose certain demographic information, such as her age, the father's education and occupation levels, the combined family income, and whether the family received public, cable or pay television channels.

Rating Scales

The construction of the Rating Scales was assisted by consulting existing scales such as Baumrind's (1967, 1971), Sears et al. (1957,1965), and Mosychuk's (1969). A preliminary draft of the schedule was examined by two experts in the field. The revised draft was then administered to four graduate student mothers who had children aged 2 to 4 years. Following the analysis of these responses, certain questions were added while irrelevant or duplicate questions were deleted. The final schedule consisted of 12 questions with 3 to 4 sub-items in each question which allowed the interviewer to rate 6 different aspects of the parent-child relationship.

On the basis of selected research on the influence of parental style, characteristics, and level of involvement, eight aspects of parent-child interaction were regarded as being important to the development of the child's operational style.

Variable 1 was designed to rate the language usage during the interview, with a focus on the level of conceptual quality and abstractness of the mother's references to her child. The limitations of this study prohibited a detailed study of language in terms of characteristics such as maturity and complexity, measured by implication through the length of communication units. Instead, this scale was a crude measure of the mother's articulateness and implies the degree of differentiation and separation between herself and her child. This variable was measured by examining the level of abstraction of each communicated response to all questions of the interview.

Variable 2 corresponds to Mosychuk's environmental process characteristic representing the authoritarian home variable. Whereas rigid parental behaviour demanding unreserved obedience ,inflexible rules, intolerance of aggression towards parents, a parental role based on power and the child's responses based on fear were characteristic of high scores on Mosychuk's variable, in this study, these attitudes were characteristic of the lowest rating on this variable.

The decision to develop variable 3 came as a consequence of evidence from Baumrind's (1967, 1971a, 1971b) studies.

Variable 4 utilizes Chaffee, Mcleod and Atkin's (1971) typology of family communication patterns. In the environment characterized by high scores on this variable,

the children were stimulated to express their ideas, were exposed to controversy, and encouraged to join arguments. In addition, critical behaviour was valued and the children made up their own minds without fear of endangering social relations with their parents. The converse, representative of low scores on this variable, was characterized by a style of parenting which stresses repressive rather than rational means to reason, and prohibits expression of dissent.

Variable 5 follows Chaffee et al.'s (1971) definition, and was representative of DeMause's (1974) theory, which placed emphasis on the development of individuality and differentiation. The highest value for this variable represented a condition where parents believed children should think for themselves rather than defer to authority or to themselves. Lower scores represented Chaffee and his colleagues consensual orientation, and DeMause's socializing family, where the child was exposed to controversy, while paradoxically constrained to develop concepts that were consonant with existing socio-relations, or to adopt parents' values. The lowest value was represented by homes where the children were expected to defer to parents in their roles as parents, and conformity was valued above individuality.

Variable 6 was used to examine the mother's characteristic of dependency fostering, in which degree of differentiation and separation was inferred. It corresponds to Mosychuk's variable seven, representing dependency

fostering and overprotection. Evidence of consistent cautiousness training, and structuring of the environment for the child to avoid potential dangers were construed as an overprotective environment and received low scores on this variable. Characteristics of the home such that the child was permitted to try new activities, to go to more distant and varied places at an early age, where anxiety was low with respect to exposure to dangerous elements, and where the child's imperfect performance was tolerated contributed to high scores on this variable.

Variable 7 corresponded to Mosychuk's variable 3 representing the language press variable, and to Baumrind's encouragement of verbal ability variable, and was purported to measure the home environment in terms of the situations designed by parents to encourage verbalization. High scores were characterized by taking full opportunity of naturally occurring situations to promote verbal interaction, such as mealtime and adult social conversation, as well as both reading and discussion of reading materials. Characteristics of the home promoting a high degree of verbal freedom and expressiveness, including permissiveness for some verbal aggression on the part of the child, likewise contributed to a high score on this variable.

Variable 8 was a measure of the level of active involvement in the child's televiewing experience. High scores represent parent reports of discussion, role playing, and usage of program content, and themes. Low scores were

representative of parental enforcement of restrictions on television usage, in the absence of discussion or input from the child.

16PF Questionnaire

The 16PF (Form C) consists of 105 items and was purported to measure "as much of the total personality as can be covered by a questionnaire" (Cattell, 1970, p. 3). The personality factors such as dominance, enthusiasm, and so forth, are not peculiar to the 16PF, and have been established as "unitary, psychologically meaningful entities which enter into general psychological theory"(Cattell, 1970, p. 4). Form C in particular was designed to be as free as possible of "value" implications, so that the person would not be tempted to answer in any particular direction for the sake of social approval. This form was also chosen because it took less time to complete.

Cattell (1970) found dependability coefficients (the correlation between two administrations of the same test when the lapse of time is insufficient for the people themselves to change with respect to what is being measured) to range from .58 to .90.

All 16PF protocols were scored by the investigator and all were included in the analysis. Motivational Distortion scores (MD) were computed and all were found to be within acceptable limits according to the manual (Cattell, 1970).

Structured Observation Sequence

The structured observation was devised to present the mother-child pair with standard stimuli designed to elicit influence and decision making attempts by the mother, and independence, curiousity, and decision making attempts by the child. The interactive score on this measure was designed to expose the participatory nature of the parent child dynamic. A copy of the scoring guide is available in Appendix III. Each observation was scored by time-sampling procedure using four segments per minute across three minutes. The scoring form described each behaviour so that the observer could mark its' occurrance. Development of the scoring form was assisted by consulting a similar form, based on the same theory of participatory interaction, used in previous research (Bishop, 1981). As shown, the lowest scores would be obtained if the mother assumed a modeling role, and attempted all the actions while the child merely observed. Concurrent with Bishop's theory, it was hypothesized that this style of interaction would foster passive, sustaining operational style on the part of the child. Conversely, the highest scores would be obtained by the mother-child pair who exhibited a participatory style of interaction, characterized by attempts to work together and to verbally interact so as to create meaning simultaneously.

Materials selected to initiate mother-child interaction were minimally structured in order to make the interaction patterns similar to those in daily life situations. The toy

materials consisted of a metal template and magnetic colored wooden shapes which could be arranged into various designs or patterns. Sample pictures were available on the lid of the case.

Operational Watching Style

During the home visit, each child was videotaped as he or she watched television in the natural home setting. Due to the limitations of the study, the programs watched varied among subjects. For each subject, the observer returned to the investigator a tape containing approximately six minutes of watching time. These were then scored and coded by the investigator and two senior observers. The scoring procedures followed that of Bishop's previous studies, with close consultation and simultaneous scoring with a senior observer who had participated in those studies.

Each video was scored in one quarter minute segments, according to which style the child used during that segment. The total score than represented a frequency count; that is, the number of times over the entire period that the child used each style of watching. Thus the child's watching score represented the number of times, or the frequency, of watching in flow style, sustain style, and segment style.

C. Data Collection Procedures

Observers

Observers were predominantly graduate students, with two being at the senior undergraduate level. Graduate students had advanced backgrounds in Educational Psychology and Counselling and were experienced in interview procedures. Undergraduate students had teaching experience and were within months of completing their Bachelor of Education degree. All observers were trained regarding the theoretical concepts of parenting underlying the Interview Scales, and had previous knowledge of Bishop's (1983) concepts of watching styles. On their first home visit, each observer was accompanied by one senior (Graduate) observer. For that family, the observer and the senior observer rated the interview scales independently for subsequent comparison and discussion to establish reliability. Only one set of interview Scale ratings of each parent, made in conjunction with the senior observer, was returned to the researcher, and no statistical estimate of interrater reliability was available. This technique provides less precise scientific data and may be prone to the limitations of observer bias. In particular, this method is more susceptible to the 'error of leniency', wherein observers have a tendency to assign the same rating to the majority of research subjects even when there are obvious individual differences among them, or to rate most subjects at the high end of the scales.

To avoid this tendency, a double set of precautions were taken to ensure the likelihood that raters would be discriminant in their ratings of the mother, and that observer effect would be minimal. During the training sessions, an emphasis was maintained on the merits of each style of mothering and level of the scales, rather than placing any evaluative statements which would lead to preferential scoring tendency. Secondly, once observers were trained, home visits were carried out within one week, to maintain the common frame of reference established during training. Continual refresher sessions between the researcher and the senior observer served to maintain a common frame of reference during the home visit. The decision to have the observers complete the ratings of each family was based on the state of knowledge at the time of data collection, and on the preference to refrain from making post-collection judgments based on "cold" data. In retrospect, however, and in future studies, it would be preferable to obtain transcripts of the interview, either taped or written, for the purposes of overcoming some of these limitations of observer bias or halo effect, and to establish interrater reliability more broadly.

Home Visits

The home visit consisted of a standard sequence of activities carried out with both mother and child, separately and in interaction, the primary function of which

was to obtain four measures of each mother-child pair. Availability of observers necessitated two differing collection periods, one set taking place between January and April, 1985, and the second set occurring in June/July, 1985.

Treatment of the Data

One statistical software package was used for the data analysis: the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - Revised (SPSS-X), available through Computing Services at the University of Alberta. All correlations were calculated between all variables. In addition, a total score for the Interview Variables was calculated and correlated, to check for differential results.

IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The preceding chapters provided a description of the variables used in this study. This chapter explains the analysis used with the data and the significant relatioships which resulted. Presented are three main sections corresponding to the research questions posed in Chapter One (see page 4). These questions examined, respectively, the styles of watching exemplified in the sample; the relationship between each child's style of watching and the mother's style of childrearing and her personality characteristics; and finally, the relationship between the child's watching and the participatory quality of the mother-child interaction. These questions were related to the variables of this study.

A. Styles of Watching

What are the styles of watching exemplified in the sample? In preliminary studies of this nature, Bishop (1982) stated that out of 28 cases, 6 were unscorable. He also explained that, although the classification was naive and primitive, observers appeared to agree in their rating 95 to 99 percent of the time. In the present study, all cases were scored according to the procedures outlined in Chapter Three, and to the operational definition explained in Chapter Two. In a preliminary analysis based on 23 cases, rater agreement was 95 percent.

Table 1. Relationship† Between Watching Style and Demographic Variables

Variable	Style of Watching		
	Flow	Sustain	Segment
Child Sex	.2280*	.0504	-.2329*
Child Age	-.0146	.2203*	-.2035*
Mother Age	.1337	-.0448	-.0635
Father Education	.1314	.1456	-.2410*
Father Occupation	.1181	.2162*	-.3180**
Combined Income	.1261	-.0924	-.0021
Channels Received	.1363	-.1816	.0071

† Pearson Product Moment Correlation
* Correlations significant at p≤.14
**Correlations significant at p≤.05

The sample was evenly distributed for sex, having 15 boys and 15 girls. The average age of the children was 3.9 years.

On Table 1 the correlations (Pearson Product Moment) are provided between operational watching style and the demographic information examined. Table 1 indicates that the child's watching in a flow style was mildly related to sex. That is, as the frequency of watching in flow style increases, the child is slightly more likely to be male. Watching in sustain form was mildly related to the child's age, indicating that as frequency of watching in sustain style increased, the age of children in the sample also increased. This sustain pattern was also related to the father's occupation level. Thus, as the frequency of watching in sustain style increased, the occupational level of the fathers increased towards the professional and managerial groups.

Table 1 also illustrates that as the frequency of the child's watching in segment style increased, the father's occupational and educational levels decreased towards the semi-skilled or unskilled groups. In addition, as segment style increased in frequency, the chances of the child being younger and female were more likely.

Although the magnitude of this correlation is rather low, it is possible that segment style of watching is more likely to occur in younger children because they have not developed the maturational processes necessary for a more

Table 2. Correlations† Between Three Styles of Watching

Style of Watching	Style of Watching		
	Flow	Sustain	Segment
Flow		-.4524*	-.3426
Sustain	-.4524*		-.6818*
Segment	-.3426	-.6818*	

†Pearson Product Moment Correlation
*Correlations significantly different at $p \leq .05$

involved mode of watching. This result would then be consistent with Rice and Wartella's (1981) notion that children learn how to watch television as their exposure to it increases. It may be that as attentional processes mature, the child's style of watching matures dynamically, which may eventally include a shift to greater involvement.

Table 2 shows the values of the correlations between Style 1 (flow), Style 2 (sustain), and Style 3 (segment). That each way of watching is reasonably exclusive of the other styles is shown by the magnitude of the correlational values, as well as by the negative orientation of these values. Table 2 also shows that, as the relative frequency of the child's watching in one style increases, the frequency of watching in the other ways decreases. That is, as the child becomes more flow-like, actions become less of the sustain and segment categories.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the sample in terms of proportion of children who exhibited the styles of flow, sustain, and segment, as well as a fourth category which includes styles which were mixed. Since each child received a score for time spent watching in each of the three forms, it was possible to arbitrarily establish a number value above which the child could be said to watch in one style fairly consistently. For example, Case A watched 13 times in flow, 3 times in sustain, and 0 times in the segmenting form. Using an arbitrary cutoff of 10 times out of a possible 16, this child could be said to watch fairly

Table 3. Proportion of Sample† Watching in Each Style

Proportion	Style of Watching			
	Flow	Sustain	Segment	Mixed
% of Sample	6.67	56.67	10	26.67
No. of Cases	2	17	3	8

† Sample N = 30

consistently in a flow way. Only 2 children in the sample watched consistently in the flow style, and represented but 6.67% of the sample.

Using Case B in a similar exemplary way, this child watched 2 times in flow style, 10 times in sustain style, and 4 times in segment style, and could be said to watch consistently in the sustaining fashion. Sustain behaviours were much more common in the sample, with 17 cases displaying scores at this level for this focused style. This represented 56.67% of the sample. Those children scoring consistently in the segment style of watching were 3 in number. They represented 10% of the sample.

To account for the remaining 26.7% of the sample, it must be must be noted that the remainder of the children watched at a level of consistency below 10 times in all of the three styles. For example, Case C watched 0 times in flow style, 9 times in sustain style, and 7 times in segment style. This mixed style of watching was found in 8 children in the sample. The statistical procedures used in this study did not allow for further discrimination of this group. That is, information regarding the mother's characteristics could not be related to the style of television watching for children with a mixture of styles.

These cases illustrate not only the proportion of children watching in each of the three styles, but also the variability of each child's scores. This would indicate that the present results are in agreement with Bishop's (1984)

statement that children move into and out of the style inherent to their operational repertoire. In 83.33% of the children in this sample, however, there was also consistency of watching in one style. Thus it can be stated that, using the procedure in the present study and for the majority of the children in this sample, styles of watching appear to be observable, hence, "identifiable patterns of action expressed during the course of watching" (Bishop, 1983).

B. Mother Variables

How does the mother's childrearing and her personality relate to the watching patterns of the child? The two parts of this question constitute two topics which are addressed separately. Childrearing styles were measured through the interview Rating Scales, and personality dimensions were measured through responses to the 16PF.

Parenting Style

Table 4 provides the correlations between style of watching and mothers' scores on the Interview Rating Scales. The strength of the associations found between the child's score and the mother rating variables remained low in value across all scales for styles flow and sustain. That is, as frequency of watching scores varied with flow and sustain, there was not a consistent similar variation in parenting. However, some significant results were indicated for children watching frequently in the segment mode. As

Table 4. Aspects of Parenting Style Related† to Watching Style

Scale	Style of Watching		
	Flow	Sustain	Segment
1. Articulateness	.0179	-.1352	.1562
2. Accommodative vs. Restrictive	.1439	-.0178	-.0821
3. Warmth	.0813	-.0817	.0463
4. Use of Reason	-.1099	-.1722	.2912*
5. Individuality vs. Conformity	-.0445	-.1277	.1881
6. Independence vs. Dependence	-.1609	-.1659	.3036*
7. Encouragement of Verbal Ability	.0926	-.0739	.0033
8. Active Use of Television	.0390	-.1917	.1824

†Pearson Product Moment Correlations
*Correlations significant at $p \leq .05$

frequency of watching in segment style increased, the mother's ratings on Scales 4 and 6 also increased. Higher scores on Scale 4 were proposed to described a mother who encourages use of reason such that she values critical behaviour and expression of the child's opinions. According to high scores on Scale 6, the mother would promote independent experimentation, encourage self assertion and be tolerant of the child's imperfect performance. The significance of these findings is further elaborated throughout the following presentation of the 16PF findings.

Personality Characteristics

Of the sixteen characteristic dimensions measured by the 16PF, only those with correlations in the significant range are provided in Table 5. Descriptive statements used to explain these dimensions are those commonly used to interpret 16PF profiles (Cattell, 1970). Examination of this table reveals that the child's operational watching style score is related to several of the mother's personality characteristics. As the child's frequency of flow increases, the mother's scores on 16PF Factors B, C, I, M, and Q3 also tend to increase, while scores on Factor L (suspiciousness) show a tendency to decrease. High scores on Factor B (intelligence) are descriptive of persons who have higher overall mental capacity or are more persevering, have better judgment and more varied interests. People scoring high on Factor C are described as being emotionally stable, having

Table 5. Mother's Personality Dimensions Related† to Watching Style

16PF Factor	Style of Watching		
	Flow	Sustain	Segment
B(Intelligence)	.3190**	.1112	-.3930**
C(Emot. Stability)	.2967**	.0191	-.2475*
G(Conformity)	-.1474	-.1126	.2322*
H(Boldness)	.1409	-.3054**	.2149*
I(Sensitivity)	.3335**	-.2257*	-.0458
L(Suspiciousness)	-.3071**	-.0361	.2959**
M(Imagination)	.2338*	.0328	-.2275*
Q1(Radicalism)	.1383	.1930	-.3109**
Q3(Self-discipline)	.2347*	.0117	-.2176*
Q4(Tension)	-.1598	-.1778	.3099**

†Pearson Product Moment Correlations
*Correlations significant at p≤.10
**Correlations significant at p≤.05

constancy of temper and control of affect. High scores on Factor Q3 show a stronger ability to bind anxiety, to be socially precise and controlled with exacting will power. Low scores on Factor L show tendencies towards being trustful and accepting, adaptable, tolerant and understanding. These characteristics are consistnt with high scores on Factor I, which indicate an emotional sensitivity and overprotectedness with a tendency towards insecurity and indulgence, but with aesthetic and imaginative interests. Factor M also indicates imaginativeness, with tendencies toward unconventionality, and absentmindedness.

In summary, the pattern of scoring which makes up the profile of mothers with children who use flow style indicates that this mother is more intellectually persevering, emotionally stable and controlled, more trusting and sensitive, with tendencies towards imaginativeness and unconventionality.

The mother of the child watching with greater frequency in sustain style shows a tendency to score low on Factors H and I. Thus she would be described as withdrawn and somewhat restrained, rulebound, careful and alert to danger, yet condsiderate. In addition, she also shows tendencies towards being tough-minded (Cattell, 1970), self-reliant and unsentimental rather than trusting and accepting, somewhat cynical yet practical, goal-directed and ambitious. This profile is quite distinct from that of mothers with flow children on the dimension portrayed by Factor I. That is,

whereas mothers of flow children tended to be more sensitive, mothers of sustain children tended to be lower in sensitivity.

Further examination of Table 5 shows that children watching in segment style have mothers scoring in a positive direction on Factors G, H, L, and Q4, and in a negative direction on Factors B, C, M, Q1, and Q3. Low scorers on Factor Q1, G and M, are described as being of conservative temperament, conscientious, conventional, and concerned with immediate issues.

Low scores on Factor B, while indicating lower ability to deal with abstract problems, are also representative of persons lower in perseverance. Persons scoring low on Factor C are described as being more labile, prone to give up and having lower frustration tolerance, while low scores on Factor Q3 describe one as being impulsive and careless. High scores on Factors H and L similarly describe a person with tendencies towards irritability and being easily frustrated, demanding and controlling, yet bold and carefree, being sociable and not alert to danger.

A summary profile of the mothers of children who segment would indicate conservative conventionality, less emotional stability in terms of low frustration tolerance and greater lability or irritability.

Comparing mothers of segment children and mothers of flow children on several dimensions revealed that the mothers of flow children showed greater intellectual

perseverance, emotional stability and control, greater trustingness, imaginativeness, and self-discipline. Mothers of segmenting children showed lesser of these qualities.

Mothers with children who segment while watching contrast with mothers with sustaining children particularly on the dimension of social boldness. Mothers of sustain children seemed more withdrawn and careful. Mothers of segment children tended to be more bold, adventurous and energetic, and not particularly alert to danger.

In summary, correlations displayed in Table 5 are of sufficient value to posit mild to moderate relationships between the described personality dimensions of mothers and the style of the child's watching. As well, each pattern becomes distinct from the others and, on some dimensions, presents a different and unique clinical picture of the mothers. Personality factors are viewed by some researchers as having only an indirect effect on a child's development. The present results indicate a slight relationship between the mother's personality and the child's style of watching television.

Secondary Results

A separate line of analysis revealed that the mother's personality characteristics showed mild levels of relationship with her parenting style. Although the majority of the Rating Scales showed weak levels of relationship to the child's watching style, several of the personality

factors which were related to watching style also showed relationship to the Rating Scales. These relationships were considered secondary because they were relationships between 16PF and parent Interview Scales, and thus represent two measured dimensions of the mother, not the watching child. To achieve greater clarity of presentation, separate tables are provided to delineate each group of mothers according to their child's watching style. Tables 6, 7, and 8 present only the relevant 16PF Factors and the corresponding related Interview Scales.

Preliminary examination of Table 6 shows that discrepant results occurred with respect to Scales 3 and 7. Scale 3 was related positively to Factors I and C, yet negatively to Factor B, while Scale 7 was related positively to Factor I and negatively to Factor M. Since these relationships are secondary to watching style, whereas 16PF dimensions have been shown to relate more directly, those scales showing discrepant and conflicting results will be relegated as requiring further research for clarification, and will not be elaborated upon.

Mothers of Flow Children

Mothers of flow children were found to score high on Factors B, C, I, M, and Q3, and low scores on Factor L. Examination of Table 6 shows that the first of these, Factor B, is in turn related to Scales 5 and 8. That is, as mother's intelligence and perseverance increased, she tended

Table 6. Personality Factors related† to Childrearing Styles of Mothers of Flow Children.

16PF Factor	Scale‡ 1	2	3	4	5	7	8
B+			-.2166*		-.3062*		-.2135*
C+		.2551*	.4522*				
I+	.2293*	.4209*	-.2225*	.2783*		.2161*	
M+							-.2814*
Q3+							-.2045*
L-					.2151*		.2922*

*Correlations significant at p≤.10
†Pearson Product Moment Correlations
‡Scale Descriptors:
Scale 1: Articulateness of Intentions
Scale 2: Accommodative in Discipline
Scale 3: Warmth and Empathy
Scale 4: Encourages Use of Reason
Scale 5: Promotes Individuality vs. Conformity
Scale 6: Promotes Independence vs. Overprotective
Scale 7: Encourages Verbal Ability
Scale 8: Participates in Child's Use of Television

Factor Descriptors:
B+ : Intelligent, Perseverant
C+ : Emotional Stability
I+ : Tendermindedness, Sensitivity
M+ : Imaginative
Q3+: Control, Social Precision
L- : Trusting, Accepting

to stress harmonious socio-relations and to promote social conformity more than individuality. In addition, she was nonparticipatory in ways the child used television (Scale 8). Factors L, Q3, and B show similar relationships with Scale 8. Further examination of Table 6 shows that as mother's scores on Factor C (emotional stability, control of affect) increased, the scores on Scales 2 (accommodative discipline) and 3 (warmth) increased. Thus, as this mother became more emotionally stable, she also became more accomodative and flexible, with more tolerance for the child's aggression. Discrepancies occurred with respect to the correlations between emotional stability and Scale 3 (warmth). This correlation was of sufficient magnitude to conclude a significant relationship between emotional stability and the mother's warmth and nurturance.

Increases on Factor I showed that as the flow child's mother became more sensitive, she showed more flexibility (Scale 2), more ability to articulate her child's intentions (Scale 1). As well, mothers of flow children tended to encourage their children to use reason when confronting problems (Scale 4).

In summary, mothers of flow children, according to relationships between 16PF dimensions and Rating Scales, tended to score higher on Scales 1 to 4, lower on 5, inconsistently on Scales 3, 7 and 8, and no relationship emerged for Scale 6. That is, she tended to be rated as more articulate of her child's intentions, more accommodative in

her disciplinary manner, as showing greater warmth and empathy, and as encouraging the child to use reason and logic to solve problems. Conversely, she was rated as promoting some degree of social conformity in terms of encouragment to adopt parent's ideas and values, such as an achievement orientation. Although the mothers of flow children did not score at the high end of all scales consistently as predicted at the outset of this study, there were indications of a trend to score at the high end of Scales 1 to 4.

Mothers of Sustain Children

Table 7 depicts the relationships (between 16PF dimensions and parenting style scores) for mothers of sustain watchers. As indicated, this group of mothers were found to score low on Factors H and I, and thus were described as tending to be more withdrawn and careful, as well as more suspicious and self reliant, and less trusting and sensitive. In turn, these characteristics, as shown in Table 7, were related to lower ratings on Scales 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7, and higher ratings on Scale 6. As this mother tended to be more withdrawn, she was more likely to promote independence, experimentation, and self assertion, which may reflect a psychological lack of availability to the child. The scales related to low scores on Factor I (less sensitivity) indicate that this mother was rated as focusing more on how the child does things as opposed to what his or

Table 7. Personality Factors Related* to Childrearing Style of Mothers of Sustaining Children.

16PF Factor	Scale 1	2	3	4	6	7
H-					-.2501	
I-	.2293	.4209	.2972	.2783		.2161

‡Scale Descriptors:
- Scale 1 : Articulateness of Child's Intentions
- Scale 2 : Accommodative vs. Authoritarian
- Scale 3 : Warmth and Empathy
- Scale 4 : Encouraging Use of Reason
- Scale 5 : Promotes Individuality vs. Conformity
- Scale 6 : Promotes Independence vs. Overprotectiveness
- Scale 7 : Encourages Verbal Ability
- Scale 8 : Participates in Television Use

Factor Descriptors:
- H- : Withdrawn, Shy, Threat Sensitive
- I- : Tough Minded, Self-Reliant

her intentions were. She would require obedience based on her parental power role, have less empathic understanding regarding achievement and verbal expressiveness.

Mothers of Segmenting Children

The relationships between 16PF Factors and the Interview Scales on the mothers of segmenting children are presented in Table 8. These mothers were described as less emotionally stable, less perseverant, and more conservative. Examination of Table 8 shows that the scales displaying discrepant or conflicting results in this group are 3, 5, and 8. The remaining scales related to the personality characteristics of these mothers (Scales 2, 7, and 6) indicate that this mother was in turn rated as more authoritarian rather than accommodative, requiring obedience based on the parental role, rather than based on empathy and understanding. This characteristic tended towards dependency fostering and overprotectiveness. Since Scale 6 (dependency fostering) was directly related to the child's manners of watching, as discussed in Section B, and in the direction of the mother's promoting independence, this last result is contradictory and difficult to understand.

C. Interaction as Measured by the Observation Sequence

How does the nature of the mother-child interaction relate to the child's operational style of watching? Interestingly, no significant relationship was found between

Table 8. Personality Factors Related to Childrearing Style of Mothers of Segmenting Children.

16PF Factor	Scale‡ 2	3	5	6	7	8
B-		-.2166	-.3062			-.2135
C-	.2551	.4522				
M-					-.2814	
Q1-	.2427		.2160	.3434		.2752
Q3-						-.2045
Q4+	-.3062	-.2162				
L+			.2151			.2922
H+				-.2501		
G+	-.3603	-.2225				

‡See Table 8 for Scale Descriptions.

Factor Descriptors:

B- : Less Abstract Thinking, Less Perseverant
C- : Less Emotionally Stable, Easily Upset
M- : Practical, Down to Earth Concerns
Q1-: Conservative, Traditional
Q3-: Undisciplined, Follows Own Urges
Q4+: Tense, Frustrated, Driven
L+ : Suspicious, Hard to Fool
H+ : Venturesome, Socially Bold
G+ : Conscientious, Moralistic

the child's watching style score and the participatory quality of mother-child interaction as measured by the Structured Observation Sequence. The value of the correlation between these two measures was -.0514 (p=.394). That is, the level of equivalent participation in the mother-child interaction did not show any significant relationship with the child's operational watching style score. It was felt, however, that this result was due to inadequacies in the instrument, or to the activity chosen for observation. These possibilities are elaborated in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four Summary

It would appear that the ways in which children watched television were distinct from each other, and that these were styles of watching. In the present sample, the majority (56.67%) of children watched in the sustaining mode. Flow children were found more often to be male, and to have mothers who scored on the 16PF as being more abstract thinking, more emotionally stable and controlled, as showing more sensitivity and trust towards others, with aesthetic and imaginative interests.

Children who sustain while watching were found to be slightly older and to have fathers employed in upper occupational groups. Mothers of these children scored on the 16PF as being more withdrawn and careful, yet more tough-minded, goal directed and unsentimental.

Those children watching in the segment mode, while tending more often to be female and younger, had fathers employed in the lower occupational groups. These children had mothers who were rated as being more prone to encourage problem solving by reasoning, and to promote independence. These mothers scored on the 16PF as being less abstract thinking, more conservative and conventional, and less emotionally stable in terms of low frustration tolerance and greater lability or irritability. All these findings will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

V. Conclusions and Implications

The present study was designed to examine children's styles of watching television and to explore the relationship between this and certain qualities of the home environment. Qualities studied included parenting style, parent personality factors, and parent-child interaction. Thirty mothers were rated on the basis of their responses to interview questions, the 16PF Questionnaire, and on the basis of their behaviours in an observed event. Each of the thirty children was videotaped watching television, and was assigned a frequency score according to the styles in which he or she watched television. This score was used as the criterion measure, with which all other measures were correlated.

A. Styles of Watching

The intention of the analysis of this question was to examine whether or not children watching television could be consistently observed to watch in a style characterized as flow, sustain, or segment. The construct of styles of watching is a pattern induced to enhance understanding and conceptualization of a certain behavioural phenomenon or set of processes. The current analysis supports the finding that this construct can be applied to other groups of children in order to understand the processes of involvement in television watching. Children in this sample were found to watch consistently in one style; the majority watched in the

focused, sustained manner. These findings would appear to be contrary to those of Frazer (1981) in whose sample the majority of children were discontinuous viewers. Bishop (1984) also found a greater preponderance of children watching in a sustain style, which is a continuous, passive type of watching. This difference may be explained by the small sample size (n=6) examined in Frazer's study. Additionally, Frazer's observation periods were more lengthy (one hour) than those in the present study.

The implications of Bishop's (1984) previous research were that styles were modal signatures of action which appeared to also be observable in classroom working situations. A study (Johnson, 1986) being presently completed seems also to support the conclusion that styles are observable in other environments, such as the classroom, and that some styles appear to be more successful than others.

An implication of the current research would be, therefore, parents' interventions which result in a change in the style of watching television may also make a farther reaching impact on the child's ways of interacting in other settings.

Media interaction can be studied in many ways. Salomon and Cohen (1978) call attention to the problems that arise when a generic variable of televiewing is "commonly treated as a descriptive aspect of behaviour, with seemingly self-evident validity, and without explicating what is meant

by the term" (p.265). In many studies, the variable of televiewing is measured by assessing the amount of time spent in this activity as compared to other leisure activities (e.g., Holman & Braithwaite, 1982). It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that media effects may not be solely a function of proportion of watching, but rather that modes of watching, and particularly, that the level of involvement in the interaction may be the more important factor.

Conclusions based on the results of this question are subject to the limitations of many similar theoretical constructs, in that the operational definition requires further refinement. In the present study, understanding of the criteria for inclusion in or exclusion from one style or another were dependent on the training and experience of senior observers. When the present study commenced, the styles were broadly defined as syndromes, and the judgements were based upon at times incomplete understanding of an abstract and tenuously defined construct.

This limitation is also prevalent in the wider body of research, as the constructs of active or passive viewing have yet to be coherently formulated. Past research has made generalizations which, when subjected to more specific study, become questionable. For example, the construct of children's attention to television is currently undergoing revision, as it has been demonstrated (Lorch & Anderson, 1979) that eyes-on and off the screen is inadequate as a

measure of this process. Thus for more accurate assumptions to be made, operational definitions of each style need to be specifically clarified.

The assignment of children to styles of watching was subject to a further limitation. The presence or absence of other people in the viewing environment was not consistent for all subjects. At the outset, the intent of this analysis was to observe the child in the naturally occurring environment. However, this limitation was not crucial. That is, by naturally occurring what was meant was that the context of viewing was unique for each individual child.

B. Variables of Mothering

Childrearing Style

The intention of the analysis of this question was to examine the relationship between the child's watching style and the childrearing pattern of the mother, the assumption being that mothers of flow children would receive higher scores on the interview scales than mothers of those who segment. The results of the current analysis did not support such a contention.

In fact, mothers of children watching more frequently in segment style received higher ratings on Scales 4 and 6. It may be possible to surmise then, that the tendency to promote independence and to encourage the child's own decision making is more complex than anticipated. Perhaps

this was a function of contact time.

While the intention of Scales 6 and 4 was to have high scores represent more ideal states, mothers scoring high on these scales were seen as tending towards being unconcerned and lacking in appropriate protectiveness. When dealing with dichotomous dimensions of parenting, in many cases the ideal is a middle or balance score, which is a weakness in the scale. That is, in these scales the high scores did not necessarily represent positive behaviours.

In addition, there was a lack of significant relationship between the flow and sustain styles, and the ways of parenting. As mentioned previously, the absence of transcribed interview responses made the Rating Scales scores subject to the observers' judgements, and therefore, subject to their bias. Having another person evaluating would have been more helpful because each observer would have then been required to take only the role of interviewer. The present procedure required the observer to also be an evaluator. By playing two roles, the observer's objectivity may have been limited.

To summarize the results of this part of Question One: There was no consistent relationship between mother's childrearing and the child's watching in either flow or sustain styles. However, mother's of children who segment were found to be unconcerned and lacking in appropriate protectiveness, such that they encouraged independence in their children, and allowed them more than ample freedom to

make their own decisions. This result is contrary to what was originally proposed.

Personality Dimensions

Results of the analysis of the relationship between the child's watching style and the mother's personality dimensions were mildly significant and indicated a unique clinical profile of mothers. Mothers of children watching in the flow manner were found to be more abstract thinking, more emotionally stable and controlled, as showing more sensitivity and trust towards others, and to have more aesthetic interests and imaginativeness. Mothers of sustain children were found to be more withdrawn and careful, while being more tough-minded, goal directed and unsentimental (terms used by Cattell, 1970). Children who segment were found to have mothers who were less perseverant, more conservative and conventional, and less emotionally stable in terms of low frustration tolerance and greater irritability.

Although there are studies relating style of parenting to personality dimensions of children (e.g. Dielman & Barton, 1983) the research is lacking in the area concerning the relationship between parent personality characteristics and those of children. A direction for further research implied in this line of analysis would explore the relationship between the parent's and the child's styles of watching television. A study of this nature would also serve

to further elaborate the construct of modes of watching.

To summarize the results of Question Two: Mothers of flow children were shown by direct relationship to be more perseverant and abstract thinking, more trusting and sensitive, and more imaginative. Through analysis of indirect relationships, she was also found to encourage her child to reason through problems rather than to force decisions based on her role of authority. She was able to demonstrate much warmth and empathic understanding of her child such that she could more articulately describe the intentions underlying his actions.

Mothers of sustain children were shown to be more withdrawn and careful, and through this lack of psychological availability, to encourage their children to be independent. These mothers were also found to be less sensitive than the mothers of the flow children, not as aware of their children's intentions as they were of the actions. Further analysis of indirect relationships in this study revealed these mothers to be more authoritarian and less empathic. They were also less likely to promote verbal expressiveness.

In turn, mothers of segmenting children were found to be conservative, and less emotionally stable in terms of greater lability and irritability. These mothers were found to encourage independence and use of reason to solve problems. Analysis of indirect relationships on the dimension of protectiveness and encouragement of

independence yielded conflicting results.

C. Observation of Mother-Child Interaction

The analysis of the relationship between the child's watching and the interactional quality of the mother and child working on a puzzle board activity yielded no significant results.

It is possible that this finding resulted from inadequacies in the instrument. In other measures designed to examine quality of response, the upper end of the scales must discriminate the most highly functioning level of response. If the instrument does not have discriminatory top values, it is said to have a low ceiling. The instrument used in the present study appears to be limited by this factor.

In addition, the instrument was designed to yield one total score based on the duration of the observed event. It did not allow for separate scores for the initiation, middle sequence or termination of the event. That is, perhaps scores obtained solely from the first half-minute segment would have shown the difference between the interactions of mothers with flow children and those of mothers of sustaining or segmenting children.

A further consideration is that the activity itself may not have been discriminative in terms of distinguishing highly participatory mothers from those involved in a different manner. It may have been that the interaction

consisted of behaviours other than those specified on the scoring form. As well, the level of difficulty of the designs chosen may have been a distinguishing factor. This was not recorded in any way.

In summary, the level of participation in the mother-child interaction was found to be unrelated to the child's style of watching. This finding may have been due to inadequacies inherent in the measurement process, or to the inappropriateness of the activity chosen for observation. Thus, specific conclusions could not be drawn.

D. Summary

In the present study, three questions were posed. First it was discovered that the construct of styles of watching could be applied to the present sample and that the majority of children tended to sustain while watching. This finding was consistent with previous research (Bishop, 1982, 1983, 1985).

Next, it was found that children who segment while watching had mothers who were rated as being more likely to encourage reason and expression of opinion while at the same time encouraging independent experimentation. This was thought to represent less concern rather than a positive behaviour.

Further, for mothers of children watching in each of the three modes, a distinct clinical picture emerged on the basis of their 16PF responses. That is, mothers of flow

children were found to be more perseverant, emotionally stable, sensitive, and imaginative. They were also found to encourage reasoning through problems to be warm and empathic, and able to describe the intentions of their children. Mothers of sustain children were found to be withdrawn, and less sensitive. They were found to be more authoritarian, and more concerned with the actions of their children than with their intentions. They were less empathic and promoted less verbal expressiveness in their children.

Mothers of segmenting children were found to be conservative and conventional. They were less perseverant, showing less emotional stability and greater boldness than either of the other groups of mothers. Conflicting results were found concerning the tendency of these mothers to promote independence or be overprotective, as well as the tendency to encourage problem solving by the use of reasoning skills. This requires further study.

E. Implications for Further Research

The results of the present study, suggest the need for further conceptualization and research. The weaknesses include the following:

1. The behavioural aspects of each style of watching were defined but required much inferencing on the part of the observers in their judgments of the child's style of watching.

2. The presence or absence of others in the natural watching

environment was not controlled and may have influenced the style which the child adopted during the scoring period.

3. The absence of interview transcripts required the researcher to rely on the judgments of interviewers, which may have been subject to bias.

4. The Rating Scales were abstract and required the observers to make evaluative judgments, perhaps too far removed from the everyday responses of the mothers.

5. Information from the puzzle board activity was limited by inadequacies in the instrument, rendering it limited in discriminatory power.

6. The sample was subject to bias. It consisted of volunteers rather than a random choice of families.

These limitations lead to the following directions for further research:

1. Each of the modes of watching requires a specific and clarified operational definition.

2. The influence of others in the watching environment needs to be examined further to explore the possibility of differential adoption of styles, dependent on this factor.

3. The interview Rating Scales need revision in ways that would make them more discreet from each other, and less abstract. As well, a range of the possible responses and the ways in which they would be categorized needs to be provided. In future studies, transcripts should be collected for this purpose.

4. The puzzle board scoring form needs to be revised to

include discriminatory top values, as well as to account for the designs chosen, for briefer durations of time and for other behaviours of the mother-child pair which may have been involved.

5. Other scoring systems need to be used to examine characteristics of the mothers, such as measures of field dependence or independence.

6. A selection procedure which identifies a sample representative of the true variation in the population needs to be used in future studies.

7. The concept of modes of watching needs to be studied in children of other cultures. This notion may have a cultural bias.

F. Concluding Remarks

The value of this study lies in its implications for childrearing. At the outset, we sought to define in an exploratory way, varying characteristics of mothers according to the ways their children watched television. Mothers of these children have been shown, through this study, to have qualities of emotional stability, sensitivity, and an active imagination as well.

The mothers of children who flow were found to show greater emotional stability. A major finding in Carew, Chan, and Halfar's (1976) research concerned the many forms of positive involvement in children's experiences that have beneficial effects on their development. They state, "Even

apparently ineffective attempts at teaching may be helpful so long as they do not cut off the child's active problem solving." (p.62). These authors illustrate by contrast, the emotionally charged atmosphere that appears deleterious to children's development. The personality of these mothers was descibed as "highly emotional, frequently hostile, given to sudden changes in mood, and often interrupting her child's play with arbitrary restrictions." (Carew et al., 1976, p.127).

Children watching in the flow mode had mothers who were found to be trustful and sensitive, in that they were tolerant, accepting and understanding. In addition to having a much better understanding of the value of certain types of activities for children, the highly functioning mothers in White and Watts' (1973) study seemed to observe and listen more carefully. They would more often think about what the child was saying and doing, and respond accordingly. The results of the Carew et al. (1976) study are also in accord with those of the present study. These authors agree that mothers of well-developing children have an understanding of the developmental significance of children's intellectual and imaginative activities. This involves sensitivity and an ability to cue into the intentions promoting a child's actions. This allows the child to explore further than he otherwise would.

Mothers of flow children were also found to be more imaginative. Carew et al. (1976) describe the mothers of

well-developing children similarly as being "flexible, versatile, and able to move easily from the didactic mode to others less structured, more open ended, more imaginative" (p.85). This quality seems related to the ability to suspend adult approaches to problem solving for ones that are a better match to the child's present way of thinking. Imaginativeness, and possibly a concomitant freedom from conventionality, helps the mother to take a more active involvement in the young child's experience.

Throughout this thesis, the concept of levels of involvement in interaction has been elaborated and clarified. The value of the observations employed was that they enable us to specify what was meant by quality of contact time. Whereas quantity of time was the length of time a mother engaged in interaction with her child, quality of time was dependent on the depth of that engagement. The question before us, then, is to construct ways in which the capacity for full engagement can be facilitated in ways mothers develop in concert with their children.

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APPENDIX I

Interview Schedule

Demographic Data

I would first like to ask you some background information. You need not feel obliged to answer these questions if you want to keep the information private.

1. How old are you? When is your child's birthday?

2. What is the last grade your husband completed in his education?
   a. Graduate professional training
   b. Standard college or university graduation
   c. Partial college/junior college/vocational school
   d. High school graduation
   e. Partial High school (10 or11)
   f. Junior High School (7 or9)
   g. Elementary school (6)
   h. Less than 6 years of school

3. What is your husband's work occupation?
   a. Executive (large firm) and upper Professional
   b. Executive (small firm) and lower professional
   c. Technical and supervisory
   d. White collar
   e. Skilled blue collar
   f. Semi-skilled
   g. Unskilled
   h. Unemployed

4. Would you mind telling me your combined family income?
   a. over 50,000
   b. 40,000 to 50,000
   c. 30,000 to 40,000
   d. 20,000 to 30,000
   e. under 20,000

5. Do you have:
   a. pay TV
   b. Cable TV
   c. public channels only

Home Visit Interview

6. How easy is it for you to talk to your child?
   a. Does he or she ask questions and listen for your answer?
   b. How do you usually answer these questions?
   c. how much do you think he or she understands what you say?

7. What things do you most enjoy doing with your child?
   a. Do you read to him or her or tell him or her stories?
   b. While you are reading does he or she ask questions about the story and do you talk about it when finished?
   c. Do you allow him or her to help with chores such as sorting laundry, cooking, raking leaves, etc.?

8. Some parents expect their child to obey immediately when they tell them to be quiet or to pick something up; others don't think it's terribly important for a child to obey right away.
   a. If you ask him or her to do something and he or she jumps up away, how do you react?
   b. Do you say something to him or her?
   c. If he or she doesn't do what you ask do you ever just drop the subject or do you see to it that he or she does it?
   d. Would you give him or her extra reasons why he or she should do it?

9. Do you keep track of where your child is and what he or she is doing most of the time or do you let him or her watch out for him or herself?
   a. How often do you check?
   b. Do you give him or her a time when he or she should be back?

10. Some families like silence at the dinner table and other families encourage conversation.
   a. Which would you say you enjoy more?
   b. (If conversation)Can you think of some topics you talked about yesterday or today?
   c. Does your child usually talk easily about day care or play experiences with you, or is he or she reserved?
   d. Do you talk about your day with him or her?

11. Are there times when your child gets his or her way about something?
    a. Can you think of an example?
    b. Are there times when he or she challenges your decisions without being defiant?

12. Does your child have any voice in making rules that apply to him or her?
    a. What are some of the rules you have for your child?
    b. How about bedtime?
    c. How about the amount of time he or she can spend watching television?
    d. What are some of the rules surrounding mealtime?
    e. How about chores around the house?
    f. How are these rules decided on?

13. Does he or she ever offer to take responsibilities that you feel are beyond him or her at this age, such as staying alone or crossing busy streets?
    a. What do you do in this situation?
    b. When your child disagrees or challenges you on some rule, what do you do?
    c. Do you ever find time to play with your child just for your own pleasure?
    d. When he or she is dawdling, what do you do?
    e. If your child asks for help with something you think he or she is capable of doing, what do you do?

14. Does your child get an allowance or do you usually buy him or her something when you go shopping?
    a. (If allowance)Does he or she buy whatever he or she likes, or do you try to guide the purchase?
    b. Does he or she help pick out the clothes that you purchase for him or her?
    c. Does he or she dress him or herself in the morning?
    d. Does your child choose what he or she wears or does he or she prefer that you do this?
    e. What other decisions does he make for himself?

15. Could you tell me more about how you and your child get along? What things do you enjoy in your child?
16. Have you encouraged him or her to go out and play with other children?
    a. How did the subject come up?
    b. What does your child do when he or she gets bored? What do you do?

17. Before your child starts kindergarten or play school

have you taught him or her things like reading words or letters, drawing, or telling time?
   a. What other things do you think are important for your child to learn from you?
   b. Do you encourage him or her to talk to other adults or friends of the family?
   c. Do you think it's important for him or her to learn to conform to authority?

18. Can you think of a problem that your child had that you helped him or her solve recently? What happened?

19. Do you regulate which television shows your child watches? How much he or she watches?
   a. What do you think he or she gets out of watching, for example "Sesame Street"?

20. Which programs that he or she watches do you like to watch?
   a. (If participation)What sorts of things do you say during the program?
   b. Do you ever talk about the characters or ask questions about the program?
   c. Are there some characters in programs that you don't like? Do you talk about them?

21. How do you choose which programs to watch, which ones not to watch, and what you will watch together?

APPENDIX II

Rating Scales

Scale 1

3.
Parents responses are aimed at elaborating, clarifying, and making meaning explicit. Answers are conceptual, with references to the intentions of the child. Parent is articulate.

2.
Explanation is attempted but limited to dealing with properties; focus is on How child does things.

1.
Limited to yes and no answers.

Scale 2 - Accommodative vs. Restrictive

7.
Child does not fear parents and feels comfortable asking questions, breaking into adult conversation or making suggestions. Most forms of aggression towards parents as well as non-adult behaviour are tolerated and accepted. Rules and standards are flexible but constant.

6.

5.
Obedience is a result of the display of respect and understanding. Parents are willing to involve the child in conversations involving planning and rule setting of actions rather than intentions. Parents begin to accept child's socially imperfect non-adult behaviour. Exerts firm control at points of parent-child divergence, but does not hem child in with restrictions. Parent uses authority.

4.

3.
Obedience of a more differential nature is demanded although still based on power as part of the parent role. Situational factors determine the obedience shown, but parent has final word. Child is seen as active in asserting himself, and parent encourages this.

2.

1.
Parent attempts to shape, control and evaluate behaviour and attitudes of child in accordance with "absolute" standard of conduct. Parent values obedience as a virtue and favors punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where child's actions or beliefs conflict with what is "right" conduct. Rigid parental behaviour

demanding undifferentiated obedience. Aggression towards parents is forbidden. Rules are inflexible for varied situations or for different children. Child responds mainly as a result of fear.

Scale 3 - Accepting vs. Rejecting (Warmth)

7.
Parents are responsive and supportive. Child is treated with extreme warmth and nurturance by parents who reveal profound empathic understanding of his individual ways and needs. Positive evaluation of child, expresses affection.

6.

5.
Passive acceptant. Parent shows gentle manner and emotional involvement. Decisions are parent induced but never forced. Accept child as long as he conforms to set standards. Achievement demanding.

4.

3.
Sees child as but one aspect of total family scene, lacks empathic understanding. Parents are emotionally unresponsive and unsupportive, neglecting, ignoring.

2.

1.
Child is treated coldly or harshly. Hostility predominates. Child's problems are insignificant, parent's needs take precedence. Child's interruptions are seen as negative and demanding. Rejecting, perceives child as a bother. Use of fear control.

Scale 4 - Encourages vs. Discourages Use of Reason

7.
Parent asks for and encourages child to express opinions. Child is exposed to controversy and encouraged to join in. Parents handle disagreements by offering additional explanations and encouraging a back and forth banter, so that the child is free to choose his course of action. Parents value critical behaviour, and believes child should look at both sides of argument before making up his mind.

6.

5.
Parent shares some decision making processes with the child. Parent believes children should make only minor decisions for themselves, and other decision are reserved for parent. Reason follows a set pattern; that is, parent may provide guidelines for the child's thinking.

4.

3.

2.

1.
Parents do not give child reasons for their directiv or actions, using a repressive rather than a rational means to reason. Parent does not allow talking back. Makes use of God as the great decides.

Scale 5 - Promotes Individuality vs. Social Conformity

7.
Parents believe child should think for himself rathe than defer to an established authority or to themselves, just because they are his parents. In addition, they feel that as he gets older he should not accommodate to institutional rules with which he disagrees. parents encourage child to be individualistic and expressive rather than achievement oriented and socially acceptable. Child can make up his own mind without fear of endangering socio-relations with his parents.

6.

5.
Achievement oriented. Child is encouraged to excel within the bounds of acceptable socio-relations. Child is exposed to controversy while paradoxically constrained to develop concepts that are consonant with existing socio-relations. In effect, he is encouraged to adopt parent's ideas and values.

4.

3.
Parents stress harmonious socio-relations. Child is encouraged to get along with others, avoid controversy, repress his feelings on extrapersonal topics. Child is given chance to encounter information on which he might base his own views, but based on those of the parent.

2.

1.
Parents wish child to respect established authority which is fixed and unchanging, and to defer to them in their roles as parents. Parents clearly discourage individuality, conform to community norms in child rearing, and have a stereotyped view of what a child is like.

Scale 6 - Promotes Independence vs. Dependence

7.
Parents encourage self assertion and independent experimentation. Allow child to try new activities or go to more distant and varied places at an early age. Do not feel overly anxious when child is in foreign place. Not concerned about over-exposure of child to degrading or dangerous elements. Pressure for responsibilities.

6.

5.
Child's performance standards and expectations are kept at a level in line with child's development. No structuring of safe situations, however caution in the naturally occurring ones is exercised. Will often help child perform in new areas rather than do tasks for him. Encourages oppositional behaviour within limitations, however limitations vary.

4.

3.
Aspects of environment are presented as potentially dangerous. Reference to naturally occurring dangerous situations. Parent reminds child of inadequacy of performance rather than allowing child to attempt certain tasks. Consideration given to some of child's decisions, overindulgent.

2.

1.
Parents frighten child about possible consequences of risk taking, make reference to potential dangers of environment. Discourages experimentation and self-assertion. Parent expresses an unrelenting vigilance over child's play and other activities. Mother provides frequent moral or physical support for the child in his confrontations with peers. Parent refrains from asking child to do certain tasks because he cannot do them well

enough, maintains control through dependency. Permits dependent clinging, overprotective and possessive.

Scale 7 - Encourages vs. Discourages Verbal Ability

7.
Parent shows high degree of interest in child's sharg of aesthetic experiences, is responsive to child's questions, encourages good speech habit. Permissiveness for verbal aggression, participation in mealtime conversation, permissiveness to listen to and join in adult conversation. Emphasis on verbal fluency, verbal freedom.

6.
Parent offers corrective verbal feedback in gentle manner. Not only reads books, and watches programs together, but also discusses them with the child. Use of encyclopedia and word games.

5.
Parent anxiously emphasizes correct verbal speech. Punishment for verbal aggression. Books/programs are read/watched together, but little or no discussion of them occurs. Convention-oriented, elaborate but not aesthetic.

4.

3.

2.

1.
Discouraging sociability. Children should be seen bu not heard. Children should accept parent's word for what is right. Language would be limited in that words and phrases would be short.

Scale 8 - Participation in Media Use

7.
Participatory - parent and child watch together and converse about the program, using verbal labels and clarification or interpretation. Parent asks comprehension questions, gives explanations of actions.

6.

5.
Parent and child negotiate what programs to watch, child plays a part in deciding.

4.
Parent is aware of child's watching, of programs, plots, characters, but is not involved. Child usually watches alone or with little interaction regarding content or characters.

3.
Parent is uninvolved, does not know what child watch unaware of programs, plots, characters.

2.

1.
Authoritarian (projective) - Parent restricts time spent watching and programs watched.

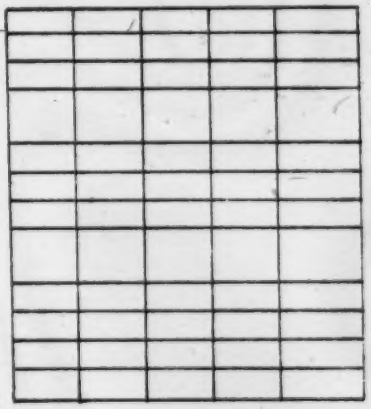
APPENDIX III

Observation Guide

1 - Mother
2 - Child
3 - Mother/Child

.1 Choosing design
.2 Choosing component shapes
.3 Placing shapes together
.4 Verbal interaction

1.1 Mother chooses design
1.2 Mother chooses components
1.3 Mother places shapes together
1.4 Mother gives verbal directions, or acknowledges completion
2.1 Child chooses design
2.2 Child chooses components
2.3 Child places shapes together
2.4 Child asks for guidance, or or acknowledges completion
3.1 Both concur on design
3.2 Both choose shape parts
3.3 Both put parts together
3.4 Both acknowledge completion



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